

16 October 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Information Services
FROM:
 Chief, Records Management Division, OIS
SUBJECT: Access to Declassified Records

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1. Recently you asked me to look at the feasibility of certain procedural changes to facilitate assisting the Department of State History Staff in obtaining unclassified documents on subjects of interest. Such changes primarily would involve segregating classified and unclassified materials after CRD review. In looking into the matter, I find that significant problems would be created in trying to be accomodating.

2. First, and probably the most important, access to any Agency records would require approval by the responsible component or office of primary interest. Providing reference service to an outside entity without such approval, even on records declassified by CRD, would quickly destroy the trust and credibility that Records Center has earned for storing and scrupulously protecting records belonging to other Agency components.

3. Secondly, refiling reviewed materials to segregate the classified from the unclassified and the resulting adjustments to the ARCINS data base would represent a considerable amount of extra work. This would further strain our already overburdened personnel resources.

4. Thirdly, after all this is done it probably would be of little value. Since DARE was not designed to facilitate historical research, it cannot be effectively searched for specific subjects without manipulating the data base through additional applications. It also is unlikely that a researcher using either DARE or DECAL could find all the information desired on a particular subject, and he probably would wind up frustrated with acquiring only incomplete fragments.

5. A last point should be made on the philosophy of making unclassified records available for research. Because providing fragments of different subjects to NARS or others would produce little benefit, it is considered better to wait for an identifiable collection of materials to be declassified and transferred as a unit. For example, a collection like the JANIS group belonging to OGSR appears suitable for such transfer once the review is completed.

6. For all these reasons, I would discourage revising our procedures for this purpose.



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cc: C/CRD
C/RSB *9/22 out ED*

DDA/OIS/RMD  saj 16 October 1980

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